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WASHINGTON STAR

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U.S., Korea Sign Accord for Quiz Of Tongsun Park

SEOUL, South Korea (UPI) — The United States and South Korea today signed a prosecution assistance agreement clearing the way for the interrogation of Tongsun Park, central figure in alleged Korean influence buying scandal on Capitol Hill.

"The Korean and U.S. representatives, having arrived at a satisfactory agreement, signed this agreement," a joint announcement said. "This agreement takes effect as of Jan. 10, 1978," the announcement said.

The agreement, signed by Assistant U.S. Attorney General Benjamin Civiletti and Korean Vice Foreign Minister Lee Chong-won, followed a 12-hour negotiating session in which the two sides agreed on procedures for questioning Park, both at the U.S. embassy in Seoul and on South Korean territory.

Civiletti told reporters yesterday he is planning to use a lie detector during at least some of Park's interrogation.

THE U.S.-KOREAN statement said the two sides held a "careful discussion on methods and procedures for interviewing Tongsun Park in the U.S. embassy, the place and methods for interrogating Tongsun Park in Seoul and such other procedures for the implementation of the mutual prosecution assistance agreement as were required."

Civiletti also told a news conference yesterday that Park may travel to the United States in late March or early April to testify on his role in the alleged scheme.

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"We start the first of a series of questionings of Tongsun Park Thursday . . . and I anticipate he will be totally candid in his own interest, the Justice Department criminal investigation's interest and everyone's interest," he said.

Civiletti arrived Sunday as head of a Justice Department team to question the 41-year-old rice dealer under conditions of an agreement worked out last month between Seoul and Washington.

He said he would hold talks today with Korean justice officials and Park would sign a memorandum tomorrow assuring him of criminal immunity in return for his testimony in U.S. trials of American citizens.

PARK HAS BEEN charged with 36 counts of bribery and fraud in connection with alleged Korean attempts to influence U.S. policy toward the Seoul regime.

Civiletti said the questioning in a

Seoul courthouse will last about 10 days and a lie detector will be used "sporadically or periodically" to verify Park's remarks.

Asked if a threatened subpoena by the House ethics committee, formally called the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, might make Park change his mind about returning to the United States, Civiletti said, "I don't think so, but it is a possibility."

"I think if members of the (House) ethics committee have an opportunity to study the joint agreement . . . they may well come to the judgment that although it is not perfect from a congressional standpoint, it is a substantial step forward," he said.

He said he talked by telephone with Rep. Bruce Caputo, a member of the House committee, yesterday and confirmed that the New York Republican plans to sit in on the questioning in Seoul.

The House unit has threatened to subpoena Park on his return to the United States to force him to appear for questioning.